



# **FIRE MARSHAL BULLETIN**

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## **State Fire Emergency Radio Frequency**

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE, Fire Marshal Division, 7150 Harris Drive, Lansing, MI 48913**

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In Michigan, radio frequency 154.295 MHz has been designated exclusively as an interagency fire coordinating system known as the State Fire Emergency Radio Frequency.

The statewide use of this emergency channel provides the following improvements in fire communication:

1. Provides improved command and control communications to supervisory personnel in situations where fire agencies from multiple jurisdictions respond to mutual aid requests or other emergencies.
2. Permits direct mobile/portable to mobile/portable emergency communications between fire units from different jurisdictions.

To date, the majority of fire departments throughout the state have updated their communication systems to include the State Fire Emergency Radio Frequency.

The Michigan State Police mobile command trailer, which is activated for major emergencies and special events, is also equipped with this frequency.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has 80 portable radios and 3 mobile vans equipped with this frequency. The mobile vans respond to large wildland fires and are stationed in the northern areas of the state. For the specific location of a mobile van in your area, contact the local DNR district fire supervisor.

### **State Network Governing Board**

The entire Michigan fire service community is served by the emergency fire coordinating communications system on 154.295 MHz. Once licensed on this frequency, each agency must abide by the regulations governing this system. The control and over-all responsibility of this system is vested in a representative board. Board members represent fire entities who use the system and are appointed from the following organizations:

Michigan State Police, Fire Marshal Division  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Forest Management Division  
Michigan State Firemen's Association  
Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs  
Michigan Fire Frequency Coordinator

### **Operation Of The System**

Member agency responsibilities concerning the operation and management of the system are governed by detailed operating procedures established and amended by the State Network Governing Board.

### **Establishment Of Technical Standards**

Existing radio networks provide the most practical application for use of the emergency frequency. Many agencies find it financially feasible to add the emergency channel to systems currently licensed in the high-band VHF spectrum and where existing communication units are compatible. Participating agencies operating on low-band VHF or UHF frequencies will have to add 154.295 MHz to their intercommunications capability.

It is the responsibility of the governing board to establish procedures for the testing of the emergency network and the manner in which the tests are to be conducted. This is necessary to insure the technical effectiveness of the system.

### **Establishment Of Operating Standards**

The dedication frequency 154.295 MHz for use in an interagency fire coordination radio network is a valuable communication tool where regular radio services are not available.

However, superfluous and uncontrolled traffic on the channel would ultimately defeat its intended purpose. A principal objective of the network operating procedure must be to establish a means of assuring disciplined and professional use of the system. Rigid control of radio traffic and enforcement of the governing board's policies are necessary to maintain system integrity and to prevent license revocation by the Federal Communications Commission.

The fire coordinating radio network is exclusively for portable and mobile service. Mobile installation must be limited to fire vehicles, in accordance with Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations for use of the frequency.

Operating procedures on the channel will follow those procedures outlined in the Associated Public-Safety Communication Officers Manual of system operating procedures. Codes shall not be used in multijurisdictional radio transmissions.

When many units are involved in multijurisdictional mobilizations, individual mobile and portable operators must exercise discretion to avoid overloading the fire coordination channel. Intradepartmental transmissions must be on the department's regularly assigned frequency. Only those transmissions necessary to coordinate emergency response scene measures with multijurisdictional units may be conducted over the 154.295 MHz system.

### **Coordination of Regulatory Affairs**

As with other fire service communications systems, any fire system operating on 154.295 MHz must be licensed by the Federal Communications Commission and operated in accord with its rules. The entity responsible for day to day operation of the network will be responsible for all licensing and regulatory matters.

Each application for use of the frequency must first be submitted to the Frequency Advisory Committee for Michigan. Detailed technical and operating plans for the network must also be submitted to the fire frequency coordinator and the fire coordinating communications governing board.

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If the request conforms with the planned use of the frequency, a recommendation will be made to grant the request by the frequency coordinator. The frequency coordinator's recommendation must then accompany the application when it is filed with the commission.

Applications for the use of the frequency should be submitted to the Frequency Advisory Committee for Michigan, c/o Mr. Al Mello, International Municipal Signal Association, P.O. Box 1513, Providence, Rhode Island, 02901, telephone (401) 738-2220.

If you have any questions regarding this bulletin, please contact the Fire Marshal Division at (517) 322-1924.

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